

Message Text

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ORIGIN AF-10

INFO OCT-01 ARA-14 EUR-12 NEA-10 IO-14 ISO-00 SIG-03
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FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY KINSHASA
AMCONSUL LUBUMBASHI
AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY ROME
AMEMBASSY LUSAKA
AMEMBASSY LISBON
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK
USICA WASHDC
AMEMBASSY BRAZZAVILLE
USINT HAVANA
AMEMBASSY RABAT
AMEMBASSY NAIROBI
AMEMBASSY ACCRA
AMEMBASSY MONROVIA
AMEMBASSY BANJUL
AMCONSUL BUKAVU
AMEMBASSY PRETORIA
AMEMBASSY LAGOS
AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM
AMEMBASSY BANGUI
AMEMBASSY BUJUMBURA
AMEMBASSY KIGALI
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY BONN
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AMEMBASSY MASERU
AMEMBASSY PORT LOUIS
AMEMBASSY MAPUTO
AMEMBASSY VICTORIA
AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO
AMEMBASSY COTONOU
AMEMBASSY YAOUNDE

AMEMBASSY PRAIA
AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA
AMEMBASSY DJIBOUTI
AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN
AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM
AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN

UNCLAS STATE 226266

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SOPN

SUBJECT:DEPARTMENT OF STATE PRESS BRIEFING, SEPT. 6, 1978

FOLLOWING IS AN UNOFFICIAL, UNCORRECTED EXCERPT FROM
THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE PRESS BRIEFING. IF NECESSARY
OFFICIAL VERSION WILL FOLLOW:

Q. JOSHUA NKOMO CLAIMS THAT HIS FORCES MERELY SHOT DOWN
THE AIR RHODESIA PLANE AND DID NOT MURDER THE SURVIVORS,
AS WAS REPORTED. I AM WONDERING, FIRST, IS THE STATE
DEPARTMENT RELIEVED TO HEAR MR. NKOMO'S REPORT THAT HIS
TROOPS MERELY SHOT DOWN AN UNARMED PASSENGER PLANE AND
ABSTAINED FROM MURDERING THE SURVIVORS?

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A. I AM NOT MUCH IN A POSITION TO COMMENT ON THIS. THE
RHODESIAN OFFICIALS CAST DOUBT ON THAT HAVING HAPPENED.
WHETHER IT DID OR DIDN'T HAPPEN, LET ME SAY THIS. THE
FIRING UPON A CIVILIAN PLANE, THE BRINGING IT DOWN, THE
LOSS OF LIFE ASSOCIATED WITH IT IS DEPLORABLE, AND WE
CONDEMN SUCH ACTION.

Q. DOES THE STATE DEPARTMENT BELIEVE IT WAS MR. MUGABE'S
TROOPS WHO MURDERED THE SURVIVING PASSENGERS?

A. I AM IN THE SAME POSITION THAT I HAVE BEEN BEFORE.
I DO NOT KNOW. WHOEVER IS RESPONSIBLE OR WISHES TO
CLAIM RESPONSIBILITY FOR IT, WE CERTAINLY ADD THEM TO
THE CONDEMNATION.

Q. COULD I ASK ONE FOLLOW-UP ON THIS, AND I DO HAVE
TO GET A LITTLE EDITORIAL OPINION, BUT IT IS NOT MY
EDITORIAL OPINION, IT IS A WASHINGTON DAILY NEWS-
PAPER'S EDITORIAL OPINION. IT SAYS: THE LEADERS OF
THE PATRIOTIC FRONT DO NOT CONCEAL THEIR AIM, IT IS
TOTAL POWER. THEY REFUSE EVEN TO TALK WITH THE LEADERS
OF THE INTERNAL SETTLEMENT-----MR. MUGABE, FOR HIS

PART, HAS ALSO MADE CLEAR HIS PREFERENCE FOR A MARXIST ONE-PARTY STATE, NOT A MULTI-PARTY DEMOCRACY. THE INTERIM GOVERNMENT HAS AGREED TO PARTICIPATE BUT THE PATRIOTIC FRONT HAS REFUSED TO DO SO. --- I WILL STOP THERE AND ASK: IS THE WASHINGTON STAR INACCURATE IN THIS, HODDING?

A. YES, ABOUT HALF OF IT IS INACCURATE.

Q. WHICH PART OF IT? COULD YOU TELL US WHICH PART IS INACCURATE?

A. AS TO WHO IS REFUSING TO PARTICIPATE IN THE CONFERENCE. YOU KNOW, MUGABE GOT UP AND SAID THAT. I AM UNCLASSIFIED

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NOT GOING TO SAY ANYTHING EXCEPT THAT HE HAS SAID THAT HE IS A MARXIST.

Q. WELL, WHERE IS IT INACCURATE? THE INTERIM SETTLEMENT HAS AGREED TO PARTICIPATE, BUT THESE PEOPLE WON'T LET --

A. THEY HAVE NOT AGREED TO MEET.

Q. THEY HAVE NOT.

A. NO

Q. THE WASHINGTON STAR IS MISINFORMED.

A. THAT'S RIGHT. THAT WAS WRONG.

CHRISTOPHER

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NNN

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